



GREEK GAMING INDUSTRY ARE WE CLOSER TO A NEW ERA?

The updated draft rules include a number of amendments to the earlier set of regulations that were circulated for consultation back in September and October 2018. The draft law aims to put an end to the temporary licensing regime (which is in place since 2012) and foresees the granting of permanent licenses of 5 years duration for live casino, live poker and betting, in order to modernize the current legal framework. Random number generated casino games are still controversially omitted.

Two types of licenses

The amendment of Law 4002/2011 will be introducing 2 types of full licenses:

1. license for online gambling, both for sports and online casinos,
2. license for various other online gaming activities.

The new bill highlights that applicants will be able to obtain both types of licenses provided they pay the equivalent amount and they satisfy all legal requirements. Transfer of the full licenses (to another legal entity or person) will be prohibited and each license will belong to only one operator.

Requirements to obtain a license

Under the draft bill, each operator applying for a license will have to submit a request to the HGC along with all the necessary documentation and pay an entry fee of €10,000. On the application the operator must mention the type of license it is applying for as separate fees apply:

1. € 4,000,000 for an online gambling license,
2. € 1,000,000 for permission to conduct other online gaming activities.

Following the successful submission of the request, the operator will have to wait for a 2-month evaluation period. Operators will also have to put up a €500,000 guarantee as part of their application.

The new license will be valid for an initial **5 year term followed by** another 5-year renewal period. However, operators will be expected to submit the renewal request at least 1 year before the expiration date of the existing license and pay the corresponding fee.

Operators currently active in the Greek online gaming market will have to apply for the new type of license up to a maximum of **6 months after** the new Law is put into effect. Operators that will not apply within 6 months after the new framework is implemented will be forced to cease operating in the local market.

All applicants and legal entities must have their registered office in Greece or any other country in the European Union and hold available funds of at least €200,000. Members of the Board of Directors of applicant entities must have a clean criminal record and all legal entities / operators that were included in HGC's black list at least prior to one year from the date of filing the request for obtaining a license will not be eligible to any type of license. Domain names of all websites will have to be registered with a ".gr" TLD. All applicants that have a registered office outside of Greece must at least have a server in Greece, which must be directly connected with the regulator.

Responsible Gaming

Among the rules under consultation are responsible gambling controls, with the HGC proposing a range of player protection measures. Licensees will be required to feature responsible gambling information

on all pages of their website, as well as offering players the ability for players to set wagering limits. Operators will also be required to intervene by restricting players' accounts if a customer displays signs of problem gambling.

Furthermore, all adverts must be consistent with the terms and conditions of the game that they are promoting, while the HGC has also made clear that ads should not target players who have been excluded from gambling.

Other measures set out by the HGC include a requirement for all operators to have in place a central information system, intermediate control system and gateway control technology as part of their security set-up. In addition, the online gaming system must have the ability to detect the physical location of a player to ensure that they are situated in Greece.

Coming into effect

The HGC is yet to confirm when the new regulations will come into effect since the new bill has not until today been brought for discussion and voting before the Greek Parliament.

CONTACT

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